

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 52 are currently pending in the application.

This amendment is in response to the Office Action of February 10, 2004.

Claim Objections

Claims 1, 3, 10, 13, 17, 22, 24, 31, 34 and 38 are objected to due to informalities in the claim language. Appropriate correction has been made.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Obviousness Rejections

Obviousness Rejection Based on Aoki et al. (U.S. Patent 5,629,539)

Claims 1 through 52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aoki et al. (U.S. Patent 5,629,539) in view of Iacoponi (U.S. Patent 5,545,592). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, as hereinafter set forth.

Applicants submit that to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Third, the cited prior art reference must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. Furthermore, the suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on Applicants' disclosure.

Applicants assert that any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention because there is no suggestion whatsoever to suggest any combination thereof, there has been no showing of success for any combination of the cited prior art, any combination of the cited prior art does not teach or suggest all the claim limitations of the presently claimed invention, and any combination of the cited prior art is solely suggested by Applicants' disclosure, not the teachings of the cited prior art.

For instance only referring to one of the elements required to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention based on any combination of the cited prior, Applicants assert that regarding currently amended independent claim 1 neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “having an insulated gate having a lower surface overlying the substrate and insulated therefrom by a gate dielectric layer, having an upper surface, and having vertical sidewalls, said upper surface and said sidewalls being covered by a first dielectric material layer” and “each access-node junction being at least partially covered by a titanium silicide layer, the titanium silicide layer being laterally bordered by the first dielectric material layer” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 1. Aoki fails to teach a titanium silicide layer, and the titanium silicide layer of Iacoponi is not laterally bordered by the first dielectric material layer covering a gate dielectric layer, but by an oxide layer 110 grown on the surface of a silicon body 100. See Figure 7.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 1 is allowable as well as dependent claims 2 and 43 therefrom.

Independent claim 3 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “each junction being covered by a titanium silicide layer and located adjacent at least one word line of the plurality of word lines, the titanium silicide layer laterally bordered by the silicon nitride layer on the sidewall” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 3.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 3 is allowable as well as dependent claims 4 through 9 and 44 therefrom.

Independent claim 10 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “each access-node junction being at least partially covered by a titanium silicide layer, the titanium silicide layer being laterally bordered by the first dielectric material layer” to establish a *prima*

facie case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 10.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 10 is allowable as well as dependent claims 11, 12, and 45 therefrom.

Independent claim 13 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “the titanium silicide layer being laterally bordered by the first dielectric material coating” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 13.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 13 is allowable as well as dependent claims 14, 16, and 46 therefrom.

Independent claim 17 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “the titanium silicide layer being laterally bordered by the first dielectric material coating” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 17.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 17 is allowable as well as dependent claims 18 through 21 and 47 therefrom.

Independent claim 22 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “each access-node junction being at least partially covered by a titanium silicide layer, the titanium silicide layer being laterally bordered by the first dielectric material layer” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 22.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 22 is allowable as well as dependent claims 23 and 48 therefrom.

Independent claim 24 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “each junction being covered by a titanium silicide layer and located adjacent at least one word line of

the plurality of word lines, the titanium silicide layer laterally bordered by the silicon nitride layer on the sidewall” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 24.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 24 is allowable as well as dependent claims 25 through 30 and 49 therefrom.

Independent claim 31 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “each access-node junction being at least partially covered by a titanium silicide layer, the titanium silicide layer being laterally bordered by the first dielectric material layer” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 31.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 31 is allowable as well as dependent claims 32, 33 and 50 therefrom.

Independent claim 34 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “the titanium silicide layer being laterally bordered by the first dielectric material coating” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 34.

Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 34 is allowable as well as dependent claims 35 through 37 and 51 therefrom.

Independent claim 38 is allowable because neither Aoki, nor Iacoponi, nor any combination of Aoki and Iacoponi teaches or suggests the claim limitation calling for “the titanium silicide layer being laterally bordered by the first dielectric material coating” to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention of presently amended independent claim 38.

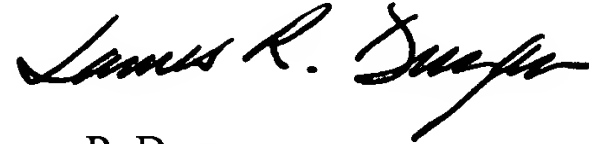
Accordingly, presently amended independent claim 38 is allowable as well as dependent claims 41, 42 and 52 therefrom.

In summary, Applicants submit that claims 1 through 52 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art.

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Applicants request the allowance of claims 1 through 52 and the case passed for issue.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James R. Duzan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the last name.

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